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art has had to face, it has made and justified a place of first importance in the larger universities.

If any of us care to furnish departments of education with statements of our aims and detailed descriptions of our courses and methods, we shall secure two results:—

1. We shall be sure of conscientious and skilful investigation and criticism of the material which we submit.

Those who feel it necessary to defend courses of art are now doing so against sporadic and unorganized criticism, and the gains if any are scattered and relatively ineffectual.

If statements of our work go to college departments of education, they pass under the scrutiny of organized and trained educational judgment. The returns will show us where, in the eyes of the educational world at large we succeed and where we fall short. Any question from this quarter will be much more specific and worth our while to consider, than the type of random criticism about which we are now tempted to concern ourselves.

2. We shall secure a new range of publicity, in the first place among departments of education, and then through them, to the educational world at large.

The method of procedure would be to inquire of departments of education in our own or other institutions regarding some person who would undertake to deal with the matter and to learn in detail the sort of material which should be submitted.

I do not know in how far such a plan as this is generally feasible, but nevertheless I mention it here because in my own experience I have found that the invited questions and suggestions, which have come from the department of education in the institution in which I teach, have been an important aid.

Taste: Its Awakening and Development: LLOYD WARREN, New York.

As there exists at the present moment an active propaganda, pursued by the Committee on Education of the American Institute of Architects, in favor of introducing into the undergraduate departments of our

universities courses inculcating an appreciation of the Fine Arts, it has occurred to me that it might be useful to examine briefly that fundamental sense in aesthetic discrimination upon which, in the student, such courses would be dependent for their utility.

Now by Fine Arts we mean Architecture, Painting and Sculpture when designed in their more important examples, and we speak of the minor or industrial arts as being those of a graphic or plastic kind applied to more familiar uses. Thus, the Perseus of Benvenuto would belong to the fine arts, while the golden cup by the same hand would take its place among the minor arts.

Now what is meant by Appreciation is very large and general. It is not only a power to discriminate between the value of different works of art or to analyse their merits individually, but it is the power of appreciating their influence for good or ill on the body politic of which we form a part.

We take it as conceded that we believe good art to make for that civilization to which we are aspiring, otherwise we would not be gathered together here, but we must not imagine that it is thought importantly so by the country at large, otherwise I would not now be speaking, for the courses which we advocate would have been long since founded, whereas per contra, at present the most important university in the State has no chair of nor any general course in the Fine Arts.

But this is not wholly Philistinism; it is more a wholesome fear of false prophets. Aesthetics is not a pure science, and we know that critics are often pure faddists; lexicographers define it as the philosophy or the science of the beautiful or of the Fine Arts, but in this country, where the fundamental aesthetic sense is so rudimentary, how shall we be protected from the sophists who may impose upon us?

To this fundamental sense has been given the name of taste, whether it be affected by sensation through the ear, eye or tongue, or through that subtle affection of our consciousness which apprehends us of the fitness of things in general. For the purposes of this discussion, however, we may be allowed to limit its meaning to the

aesthetic sense which is affected by vision, and the meaning of appreciation to the faculty which allows us to discriminate between the various evidences of that sense as expressed in works of art.

Now taste thus used is much more limited in its meaning than when used in a gastronomic sense. We say that food has a salt or sour, bitter or sweet taste, but we do not say that objects have a simple or mannered one. We say that they are in good or in bad taste, pronouncing an immediate verdict on them, which may be sound or not, in proportion to the value of our own personal appreciation, and it is the elements making up this appreciation which it is most important for us to study if we are to teach it. In short it is the education of taste that we are after, the development of a primary sense revealed to us by the eye so delicate that it may be affected by our every surrounding, or hoodwinked or humbugged by any charlatan who would substitute a mental process in us to take the place of its free exercise.

The fact is that in many persons taste is rudimentary only and that when a selection of objects is made by them this sense is not employed, but some other faculty is used for the purpose; or it is sought, not to gratify a sense which does not call for satisfaction, but to gratify some desire which is quite foreign to that sense. For an example with which we are all familiar, take the drawing room overloaded with gold and red plush, which strikes us with horror when we enter it, and of which the owner is so consciously proud. Taste has had no part in its perpetration whatsoever, notwithstanding the pleasure it gives the possessor; of one thing we may be sure, he has no taste, and it is merely his desire for ostentation or some other feeling which is gratified in it. The room is in bad taste of course, it is a perfectly blatant, obvious example of it, because it will shock anyone who has the least vestige of taste; but the person who admires it is not necessarily a person of bad taste; it does not appeal to him through that sense; he does not possess it; it tickles his ideas of splendor or riches, or warmth or what not, and he is pleased—as is a savage in his war paint—and nothing more.

The true meaning of this word taste is rather difficult to grasp, we have so abused it in our vocabulary. If my judgment of the beautiful is not exactly yours, you are pretty sure my taste is bad, but can we be quite sure what part of this judgment is attributable to pure taste and what part some other faculties have had to do with it? You may have just been reading Ruskin and can see nothing but Tintoretto. I may have been reading Berenson and worship the pre-Raphaelities.

The French have preserved better than we the meaning of this word. It is an old adage with them, to start with, that concerning flavors and colors there is no discussion, "*des goûts et des couleurs il n'y a pas de discussion*," and they say, concerning a novel artistic mode "*il faut s'y faire l'oeil*," one must make one's eye for it. But they qualify taste in many ways; they speak of a thing as being in the mannered taste of the XVIII century, or in a flamboyant taste, or in a severe taste, not necessarily good or bad. If you like that sort of thing, why, that's the sort of thing you like, though it may not mean anything to me. We, however, have shibboleths; to us a *simple* thing *must* be in good taste, but I remember my master at the Ecole des Beaux Arts answering with irritation one of my comrades who claimed simplicity as a merit in his design, "*Oui, Monsieur, c'est simple et de mauvais goût.*"

In fact, we seem to me to be very confused in this matter of taste, nor do we know where we stand. So much has been written on the question of appreciation of works of art that we do not know how much of our personal appreciation depends on our own sense, naturally developed, and how much on every external influence which has been brought to bear. We have always before us panegyrics, condemnations, commentaries, analyses on every epoch, style, school or individual artist. Our intellect has been appealed to in every conceivable way to affect our appreciation; we must condemn a certain work because it is immoral, or because it is prudish, too sketchy, or too finished; depending on whichever theory of criticism we may choose to adopt.

In other words, there is always a reason *why* we must like or dislike. We are people of little faith in our *instinctive* taste, and why? because it does not answer to our call; it is for the most part undeveloped or atrophied.

How strikingly this is brought to our minds by many of the interiors we see in the great comfort of our country houses. See our hostess's apartment; she has learned all about the style of The "Louis' " as they are upholsterily called; and there they all are in bedroom, parlor and bath; rose and pistache and mauve, lambris, appliqués and bergeres.

Their every arrangement clashes, unguided as it is by a delicate sensibility, and we retreat with a feeling of relief to our host's den, untrammelled by design, but penetrated by an atmosphere created by the leather chairs, the books, and the prints, which *he already likes*.

It is a very elusive thing, this sense of taste, so easily suppressed, or mislead, and yet it seems to me the very foundation and safeguard, too, of real appreciation.

Now, the great importance of taste as a national attribute far exceeds that capacity of appreciation of works of art which is esoteric and the achievement of the few. Think what it has brought to France in its poplar-lined roads, in its fenceless fields, its public forests and its carefully preserved monuments of antiquity. It is for the gratification of an unconscious desire that blue iris grows upon the thatched roofs of its humble cottages, and well trimmed peaches and quinces over espaliers on their walls. It is the national desire to be pleased that has preserved the gardens of Versailles and the ivy mantled ruins of Coucy now made a shapeless quarry by the invading Hun. This native taste carried on to its full development among the connoisseurs has completed the task and has made of Paris itself a place where one may live with delight. It has prevented disfigurement, it has preserved ancient beauties and it has created others anew.

But as a nation we are not sensitive to these things, we do not recognize their importance in making our lives more worth the living, notwithstanding that we have the

city of Washington, designed by a Frenchman, as a present witness. Our Maecenases content themselves with collecting Chinese porcelain and old masters at enormous prices, and many of them become connoisseurs in specialties of this sort, which is surely an innocuous pursuit for declining years, but is unvital, and will never persuade the youth to whom vitality and purpose are the stimulus of achievement.

If we are to develop a sense of beauty in works of art in the rising generation, we must first of all convince it of its utility, reveal to it the sensual gratification beauty gives and the value of that gratification. It should begin with the public school in the broadest, simplest way; not narrowly, by teaching children so much to draw pictures or designs, leading them to believe that art is confined to craft, but making them understand that it may be around them everywhere. What matters it that there is a museum at the distant end of the squalid Long Island road, hideous with the noise of trollies and fetid with smoking motors. The funds expended on a garniture of black hawthorn, or on a Meissonier, or a Vibert (bought twenty-five years ago and now passed unnoticed for a Cezanne further on), would have lined it with trees, and a little taste implanted in the population would soon stop the smoke of the automobiles at the nearest police station! We do not crave for museums, at least primarily, we crave for every form of art in its proper place. Collected together works of art are wonderfully interesting; culturally, spiritually, intellectually; but we lead a busy, purposeful existence, and we have a right to lead it as happily as we can, and we need these things to be accessible to us, to be of our everyday life, that we who run may read. In Paris the Horses of Marly are ours as we enter the *Champs Elysées*, and the fountain of Carpeaux, and the Puvis as we attend our lectures at the Sorbonne.

How would you develop a national taste by rehearsing to yawning boys the Ruskinian subtleties of Tintoretto and Turner, or the rivalries of classicist, romanticist or impressionist? Awaken them to the joys of life that beauty brings. Picture to them the flower-

ing chestnuts of a street leading to that great arch of imperishable glory, through the like of which they might pass here, *if they would*; speak to them of the fane rearing its incomparable towers, in the like of which they too may utter their prayer—*if they will*; of the academic halls where Delaroche and Ingres have left their legacy instead of the exposed heat stacks and ventilating tubes, which decorate our schools. Let them roam in their imagination through the Boboli Gardens and by the banks of the Arno, and let them at the same time think of our City Hall Park and the shore of the East River. For those are *results* for which we are to teach, not mausoleums filled with dead things. It is this sense of taste, then, which we must awaken and develop, and it is a propaganda which we must undertake. For in the production of works of art there is more than the artist needed. There is needed also the desire for beauty on the part of the public, who are our students of to-day, from a perfectly sane, sober point of view, from the conviction that they are getting something out of it that makes it as worth while as automobiles or *tiled* bathrooms, that it makes them happier in their daily tasks, and above all that it is for them themselves that it exists, and not for a few esoterics who know all about it, because they have spent their lives in doing nothing but cram up on the subject of art.

If we are to arouse this sense of taste, which, developed, will create appreciation, it is through the imagination that it must be done, and through the natural channels of our national character, for this thing is a sort of an aesthetic conscience, like our instinctive knowledge of good and evil, ever changing and ever modified with the trend of the times, with our pursuits and with our modes of thought, for what is good taste now may not be good taste a dozen years hence, just as Gothic taste was discredited in the Renaissance. It is not a thing of critics and pedants, and ruthless of them it passes them by, living in its appropriate moment, a *vital living* thing, and drawing its beneficent strength from the power of its momentary conviction.